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847 who died after the third miscarriage, and likewise of Felipe's wife, who complained to me that she had had two premature births. Malicious women unjustifiably reproach these two, saying that they had consciously transgressed. Hence it is certain that willful abortion, which is undertaken secretly by a woman, is extremely rare. Abortive medicines from the animal and vegetable kingdom are unknown.

855 Love for their own child guides the parents in everything they regard as good and advantageous for it. Many customs and individual child-rearing methods have developed from long experience; they are a safe rule of conduct for the parents in the care and treatment of their darlings. To deviate from them is prohibited by the respect they steadfastly cherish for the ancient tribal heritage handed down by their ancestors.

2. Birth

842 Our Yamana regard giving birth as a natural function, but in their conversation they treat this matter with genteel reserve. The connection between sexual intercourse and conception is sufficiently clear to them. They could not refrain from laughing when we mentioned to them that there were some groups of human beings to whom these facts were apparently not known. If one asks them specifically about the origin of the child, they refer solely to the union of the two /701/ spouses and say that with their sexual union the child begins to form in the mother's belly, that it continues to grow until it has attained the customary size, and that then it becomes an independent being. They limit this explanation to the development of the body. When I asked Calderon about the soul of the child, he 842 did not give me a clear answer, for in general these Fuegians are 714 rather vague about the conception of the human soul. He said: "When the child is born, it has its kēspix, for, after all, it is alive. But who knows where this comes from!" With Nelly I talked about this repeatedly in Fred Lawrence's presence; I came to the conclusion that the Yamana lack clear ideas about the origin of the soul in the developing child.

•843 The Yamana women do not understand the direct connection between the cessation of menstruation and the beginning of pregnancy.

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843 It is only when this condition continues that they accept the fact of its cessation (117). Experience teaches them that the fruit grows

117. Hahn (a):805 mentions the following physiological observation: "Pregnancy is of the same duration as elsewhere...She has as signs of it the cessation of the menses, the swelling of her breasts, and the movement of the foetus" /translated from French/.

in proportion to the size of the abdomen of the woman who is to become a mother, and that this goes on until birth takes place. The mother thinks a great deal about the child she is carrying under her heart, and full of confidence she speaks of her hopes to the women near her. She longs for the birth, not because she would like to be free of the slight discomforts, but so that she can soon, in the happiness of motherhood, hold the child in her arms. Gertie said to me: "Many a young woman waiting for her first child feels that it takes too long. In her impatience she often becomes ill-humored!" Every woman hopes for a sturdy and beautiful child, and to achieve this she places a few blossoms of má'ku (Embothrium [824] coccineum; see Fig. 78) on her genitals and presses them tight with her upper thighs. She spends the whole night this way, thinking constantly of the child which she has already been carrying for several months. At the same time she repeats the wish in her thought: "May this child be as beautiful as the má'ku!" Her husband is very pleased if she repeats this procedure often (118). Instead

118. I was unable to find an explanation for what Hahn (a):806 cites as "a popular belief that children are sometimes born with a part of the body of an animal when the mother has been frightened in the course of her pregnancy" /translated from French/.

of má'ku (southern dialect), most people say máku.

Even though pregnancy is far advanced, a woman does not curtail her work, but must keep it up in full measure. The women of the neighborhood constantly recommend uninterrupted and lively

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843 activity, especially to those young women who are expecting their first child. Sexual intercourse is discontinued for two or three months before the confinement.

843 262 During this time the married couple are required to observe a few food taboos. The /702/ woman may not eat roasted pieces of meat, mussels, or fish as hot as usual, but must let them cool off a bit. It is said that food that is too hot is now detrimental to her and her child. The man is not permitted to eat the head and hind portion of fish and birds; he must be content with the center piece. Shortly before the confinement neither of the two parents may eat the meat of cormorants, otherwise the child would be born deformed.

[824 137]

Fig. 78. Embothrium coccineum. One-half natural size.

/Fig. 78 appears here./ For a few days before and after confinement the woman herself may not break or crush the bones of birds. It is well known that in the case of some birds, especially cormorants, the longer bones are broken open before they are roasted in the fire, so that the marrow will penetrate the meat and make it juicier. Furthermore, their spinal columns are cracked at various places so that the feathers can be plucked more easily. Now if the woman

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843 262 who herself abstains from the meat of cormorants and, even better, from birds generally wishes to prepare a roast for her family, she either leaves the bones whole or she asks someone else to break the bones in the meat of the bird. If she herself were to do it, she would have to be prepared to give birth to a crippled child. The woman must also abstain from sea urchins, but the man is not required to do this. He may not break open the calcareous shell, however, but must have someone else do it, otherwise the child would be born with a split skull (119).

119. Calderon told me this in August, 1923. As a result of searching questions I obtained the impression that this superstition is connected with the greater or lesser width of the fontanel with which the child is born.

843 When the external indications of pregnancy point to an imminent confinement -- this was unmistakable in former times when nakedness was customary -- the relatives and neighbors are more concerned in their thoughts and speech with the two persons who /703/ are soon to be presented with a child. They also discuss the expected event with the young couple. There are always several women on hand with good advice, especially for a woman who is giving birth for the first time. They encourage her with the following prospect: "Soon you will hold your own child in your arms. What happiness and what joy you will feel! -- It is indescribably gratifying for a woman to take care of her own child. -- Only then will you be a real woman, when you have a child of your own, and this will soon happen!" Old Mary repeated these words to me as the basic ideas behind such reassurances.

844 Women who are giving birth for the first time receive special attention. They are supposed to move about constantly or at least walk a great deal and to gather wood and berries diligently, in other words, to sit as little as possible. The things that were told the girl on the occasion of her first menstruation are now repeated, and special emphasis is placed on what was said about the treatment of newborn babies. The constant encouragement, together with the restless activity, hardly gives the young woman time to become

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842 some. As a result the Yamana have the idea that sterility in marriage is solely attributable to the woman, whom they call a caxula. Thus this unusual fact (168) is not /729/ completely un-

168. The unreliability of what Hahn (a):805 maintains is obvious: "Sterility is very common in both sexes, according to Mr. Bridges, who attributes it to the precocity and the abuse of sexual relations" /translated from French/.

known, and they pity the woman who is forever denied the blessing of children. My inquiries agree with Hahn (a):805 that "spontaneous [843] abortion is very rare" /translated from French/. It happens almost always as a result of great physical exertion or very great shock.

162 According to all the observations that we know of, the sexes are somewhat unevenly distributed in favor of girls among the Yamana. The venerable John Lawrence assured me of this, and in Hyades (q):190 we read: "In our observations we have also established a slight predominance of girls over boys" /translated from French/. A census taken by Bridges in 1884 (p. 224 /untranslated, but the figures referred to are given in English/) showed that among 1,000 natives there were only 277 men as against 316 women.

845 In this tribe of Fuegians twins are just as rare as among the neighboring Selk'nam (Vol. I, 390). From former times I am familiar with only the one definite report that "Jemmy Button's eldest daughter has two beautiful twin children about four months old" /cited in English/ (MM:XI,274;1877). Later Hyades (q):190 mentions a woman 45 years old among whose ten children there was a pair of twin brothers. Finally, Holmberg (a):57 maintained: "I have a photograph of a Yahgan woman with twins, who are regarded as an extraordinary event" /translated from Spanish/. Were these witnesses really reliably informed? At any rate a twin birth is an extraordinarily rare phenomenon.

145 There are no accurate observations about the menopause, the time when menstruation ultimately ceases. Bridges and Hyades (q):189 observed pregnancy among women who were already 45 years old. Hence Fuegian women conceive until relatively late